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No. 23

FOREIGN TELEGRAMS.

London, May 30.

In the House of Commons, Sir A. Torrance asked if it had been found that the conditions of factory labour in India require legislation for shortening the hours of work.

Mr. Morley replied that the report was in the hands of the Government of India with whom he was communicating regarding its early publication.

Reuter's agent in Hongkong reports that the provincial troops have engaged the rebels, killing over a hundred and capturing the leader together with flags and ammunition.

The gunboat *Sumlong* with troops has proceeded to Swatow.

A committee composed of 75 influential men has been formed in San Francisco for the purpose of fighting the forces of disorder.

Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman denied that Sir A. Macdonnell had expressed a desire to resign the Irish Under Secretaryship or that his transfer to an Indian appointment was intended.

London, May 31.

Reuter's correspondent, telegraphing from Amoy, states that thirty thousand people are in revolt forty miles south of Amoy.

The Viceroy of Fuchow is sending eight thousand troops.

The disaffection is spreading.

Warships are expected.

London, May 30.

President Roosevelt, speaking at the Indianapolis Memorial Day celebration, vigorously denounced the predatory millionaires.

He insisted on the Government control of railways and the prosecution of anyone who criminally plundered others. He was opposed, however, to unreasonable restrictions on capital and believed that Government control would enhance the value of stocks.

London, May 31.

The *Times* New York correspondent telegraphs that the situation in San Francisco is desperate.

Forty thousand people are out of work.

There is no doubt, says *The Times*, that the San Francisco newspapers are engaged in a conspiracy of silence to prevent frightening foreign capital.

The *Tribune* states that it is reported that the Government has assigned sixty thousand for the development of experiments in India in connection with monorail system.

London, May 30.

Reuter's correspondent at Cairo telegraphs that a native officer and twenty-five men left Dongola in April and have since been missing.

The officer's body has been found and a sergeant and three men rescued, but the rest are missing.

London, May 31.

Mr. Morley has appointed Sir R. Havelock Charles to represent

India at the international Red Cross Conference which opens in London on June 11.

London, June 1.

In a farewell message to the press Prince Fushimi declares that he is leaving England with regret. From his landing to his departure he has received nothing but kindness not only from the Royal family but from all classes.

He left £300 for London charities and £100 for Liverpool.

King Edward, as a special mark of personal friendship and high esteem, has placed a warship at the disposal of Prince Fushimi to convey him to Vancouver and Yokohama.

Reuter's correspondent at Amoy telegraphs that a battle occurred midway between Amoy and Swatow in which there were seven hundred casualties.

The rebels retired.

More fighting is expected.

The rebels are well led but badly armed.

Foreigners have not been molested.

The rebellion continues to spread.

A telegram from Sidi bel Abbes states that the Pretender's and the Sultan's troops fought the whole day on the 31st May.

The carnage was frightful.

The Sultan's camp was pillaged.

The Sultan's army is wedged between rebels and cannot retreat.

The Times, in a leading article, attributes the sedition in India to following false ideals in Indian education, namely, instruction without formation of moral character.

London, June 3.

Reuter's correspondent at Teheran telegraphs that the Governor of Hamadan has returned from the mission to Salar-ed-dowleh, who is reported to be claiming the Crown, and arrived within a day's march of Hamadan.

Salar-ed-dowleh refused the terms offered and applied for the mediation of Britain and Russia.

The British and Russian Ministers at Teheran have had audience with the Shah.

It is officially announced that the Government propose to arrange an official Education Conference. Lord Elgin and Mr. Morley are preparing to issue intimations.

Sir Charles and Lady Rivas yesterday lunched with the Prince and Princess of Wales at Marlborough House.

London, June 4.

Mr. Morley, replying to Mr. Smeaton, said that the Viceroy had refused his assent to the Punjab Colonisation Bill on grounds of public policy as it was strongly opposed in the Punjab Council and the provisions generally were misunderstood.

Sir Edward Grey, replying to Mr. Lynch, said that the British Minister at Teheran has reported that the younger brother of the Shah is in revolt between Kermanshah and Hamadan and that military measures are being taken.

The trial of seven persons for complicity in the attempt on King Alfonso and his bride on the wedding day has begun in Madrid.

The Anarchists threaten reprisals in the event of conviction.

MADE IN JAPAN

EDITORIAL NOTES.

As the news comes to us of the spread of rebellion in China, we are once again given a spectacle of the insanity of man's fury. Thus far there does not appear to be any special reason for this fearful uprising except that the Chinamen concerned are against the Government. Many of our readers are doubtless familiar with the story of the emigrant to the U. S. A. who was approached soon after his arrival by a political "drummer," and asked what party he belonged to. The man was one of those who had left his own country for reasons less creditable than urgent, and he replied promptly "I don't rightly know yet, but I know I'm agin the Government."

The situation in China is too serious to allow any appropriateness to such light stories as the above, except as they illustrate the foolish hatred and jealousy of authority which is sometimes bred in the minds of the ignorant. The Chinman is exasperated at something, and immediately strikes out at whatever he may find nearest. Sometimes his attention is drawn to missionaries, and then they become the victims; at other times, such as the present, the fury is directed simply towards officials. The significant feature of all such risings however, is that this unreasoning rage is incited and largely directed by men who are themselves by no means to be excused on the ground of their ignorance. The mob is simply a terrible tool in the hands of a conscienceless plotter against the powers that be.

In the case of anti-missionary riots it has been usually found that the mischief makers were either priests whose prestige had suffered on account of the new doctrines, or else individuals who had some private grudge against the foreigners. When the mob directs its animosity towards the Government, there is pretty sure to be some one or some few at the head of it, who have been disappointed in their political hopes, and have played upon the religious or racial prejudices of the common people for their own ends. The more enlightened such people are the more culpable they are.

The report of the trial now in progress at Rawalpindi shows that Indian people have been betrayed in the same fashion by those who ought to have been their leaders. The pleaders who are answering to the charge of inciting riots are men of intelligence. They could have been such a force for good in the city, where they are now on trial, as we can hardly estimate. But it seems, as much from what they left unsaid in their speeches, as by what they said that they were not above deceiving the simple peasants in regard to many serious and important matters.

India has been suffering from a terrible scourge. No,

words can do justice to the horror of the plague as it has spread during the past six months. The hearts of men have sunk within them. In view then of this awful calamity, it is the duty of intelligent men to throw the blame (if blame there be) only upon the proper shoulders. To allow the slightest shadow of suspicion to rest upon the innocent is an actual crime. How much more, then, to insinuate at responsibility for this terrible pestilence. Every intelligent man in India knows perfectly well that the Government has left no stone unturned for freeing this land from the plague. Its sanitary measures have been balked by the ignorance of the people, and their prejudice against anything new. And yet, in spite of this knowledge, men of influence and education have helped in spreading the reports that the Government poisoned wells and caused this dreadful disease to ravage the land. *God is just.*

THE GIFT OF FAITH.

SERMON PREACHED BY THE PASTOR, WYLIE AVE., CHURCH
PITTSBURG, PA.

"Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the Word of God."
Rom. 10:17.

The literal Greek in this text is "Faith from hearing and hearing through the Word of God." The Apostle incidentally drops this remark about faith. He was not discoursing upon the genesis of faith, he was speaking about the salvation of Jews as well as Gentiles and lets fall this pearl of truth. We pick it up and find a wondrous revelation of God and His way of faith.

I. FAITH.

Faith is a wonderful thing. God makes it to be the instrument or condition of our salvation. The fact is, if we have this Gospel faith, we have salvation.

Faith is:—

1. *Not Mere Intellectual Assent.* Some think that mere intellectual assent is faith. The demons have this kind of faith, they "believe and tremble." Faith is more than an intellectual assent to the Word of God, or to the truth of God. The mind may say "Yes" to all the truth, but does the heart believe it?

2. *More than Conviction of Reason and Evidence.* Some endeavour, by massing together evidence and proof, to put reason, as the foundation of faith, but faith is more than a conviction founded on reason. A true child of God does not receive very much spiritual help from the so-called Evidences of Christianity that mass the different proofs, external and internal of the truth of Christ and Christianity. Even though faith, after you have it, is eminently reasonable, it is not founded upon reason. This text says it is "of God."

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3. *More than Resting in the Letter of the Word.* Some have the idea that if they rest on the letter of Scripture in an intellectual way, that that is faith. They think, that if God made a promise, that all that has to be done is to grasp its outer literal meaning, and then it will become theirs. This contains a part truth, but besides this outer mould of meaning it is necessary to hear God's voice, in and through the promise and to rest in Him. Faith is spiritual but the letter killeth. He who has no more faith than the faith and confidence that springs from a view of the letter of Scripture only, has no faith. That man will be brought to shame, but the Word says, "he that believeth shall never be ashamed," therefore the kind of faith that has its source and origin in the letter of Scripture alone, will pray and not be answered. Such faith is vain.

4. *More than Desire.* "Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the Word of God" and is more than desire. A desire for spiritual blessings, even intense longings for the things we pray for, must not be mistaken for faith. Faith is more than desire. A desire to be saved, will not save you unless you accept the salvation. Good desires are good, and bad desires are bad, but God promises to give you "the desires of your heart." He not simply answers the desires that we have, but will put the very desires within and then fulfill these desires. This may go along with faith, but it is not faith. Desire longs for, but faith takes what God offers.

5. *More than Feeling.* A great many confuse feeling with faith. If they have a good feeling, they think they have faith. If they arise in the morning with dyspepsia, they think they have no faith. Thus their faith depends on the condition of their health, and on the state of their spiritual feelings. Some are always feeling their spiritual pulse. It is right to do this in order to let God help you, heal you, and bless you, but let us look "unto Jesus the author and finisher of faith"—unto Jesus, not unto feeling. The Word does not say, "Whosoever feelth should not perish"—but, "Whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life."

6. *More than Will.* Faith is not will-power. If a person only wills to be saved, he will not be saved; our will is necessary, but faith is more. By will-power you can accomplish a great many things, but no man ever saved himself by will-power and there is something more than resolution needed to save a man. This is very evident in the case of a drunkard who has passed a certain stage in the habit of strong drink, he needs something more than will-power to rescue him, he needs the power of God and the faith of God. Will-power alone cannot lead a man to anything better than a moral life, which faith brings Christ in his heart and unites him to God.

7. *Not Fanaticism.* Faith differs from fanaticism. Fa-

naticism is wilderness, madness, imagination, it acts and says that it believes above and beyond that which is written; Faith rests upon the Word of God.

II. FAITH'S SOURCE.

1. *Has its Source in God.* This text declares that faith springs from the center and heart of God, from Him as a subjective source, and out of Him who is its source. It arises not from man, it is the gift of God. When Jesus said He spoke not of Himself, He meant that He did not speak out of Himself as a source, but whatever He heard the Father speak, that He spoke; when Scripture says, the Holy Spirit speaks not of Himself, it does not mean that He does not speak about Himself, for He certainly does speak of Himself; for He inspired the Bible, and all we know about the Holy Spirit is what He spoke. It means He does not speak His own words out of Himself as the source, but He speaks what He hears from Christ and the Father. So when it says that faith is from God, it means that it has its source in God, it comes out from Him, and comes into us. The genesis of faith in us is from God. This is a truth we need to learn. Let us not try to bring it about by will-power, or through desire, but take it as God's gift to us.

2. *Faith is the Substance.* "Faith is the substance," H. b. 11:1, for when we have this kind of faith, we have the very substance of the thing for which we believed. If we have mere intellectual faith, it does not give us the substance; but if we have the faith that springs from God, we have the substance of the things for which we believe, and that, as soon as we believe. "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." We really possess them, when we have this faith—"Whosoever believeth should not perish, but have everlasting life," not will have, but "have." He has the substance, for faith is the substance. If one needed five hundred dollars and you go to that one to-day and tell him that you have put that amount in the bank to his account subject to his order and check, he has nothing but your word, but as he believes your word he has the substance. Perhaps his natural hands will not handle the five hundred dollars immediately, but if he really believes that it is put to his account, he has it and he can use it. "Abraham believed God and it was accounted to him for righteousness,"—put to his account as righteousness. Beloved, if you want power, and you will believe God, God puts it to your account for power. "Faith is the substance." This applies not only to money but to anything else you need. God says, "All your need," temporal, spiritual, and physical. It is true that a great many take feeling or reasoning, or the letter of the Word of God, or some outer thing, mistaking it for faith, and have nothing but excitement or false satisfaction. Nay God shows us what faith is, that it is God given, that it has God as its source, and that it is the substance.



3. *Faith is the Hand, Filled.* Some one has compared faith to the instrument of our salvation, the hand, that receives salvation. Scripture teaches, that we are saved by the blood, meritoriously, but it also says that we are saved by faith, that is instrumentally, the hand by which we receive salvation. Again, Scripture teaches we are saved by works, manifestly or declaratively. Faith is the hand that receives salvation, and this hand, of which we are speaking, is always full. Let me repeat that we are saved by faith instrumentally; faith is the hand that receives salvation, and if it is this kind of faith, there is always something in the hand, it is never empty, because "faith is the substance." It is not the empty hand which is a type of faith, but the filled hand. If you see this truth, it will be a wonderful help to you, to believe God, no matter what the seeming circumstances may be. He gives us soon as you truly believe. "He that believeth hath."

III. FAITH'S METHOD

We always like to bring in the *how* of any sermon, that we may have practical results. This text answers the question, How? "Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the Word of God." That is the way to get faith, beloved, simply listen to the Word of God.

1. *Listening.* A text in Isaiah according to the French translation reads, "My people will not listen to Me." There is really a great difference between hearing and listening, to listen is to hear with intent, and this is the kind of hearing spoken of in our text. "Faith cometh by hearing," by listening to the Word of God, listening for God, and having a purpose in the listening. This word in the Greek is the foundation word of our English word, *acoustics*.

One time there was a church, it was magnificent, and there was a certain congregation which desired a similar structure with just as fine acoustic properties as the first church. They gave out the contract to build a church, a facsimile of the one with the fine acoustic properties. After it was completed it looked exactly like its pattern, but it was a perfect failure as to acoustics. A lawsuit was begun, and they went over all the specifications, and found it exact as to measurements, and the same amount of bricks and stone had been purchased. As far as beauty was concerned everything was the same; but as they measured there was a slight difference in the length of the auditorium; they could not understand it, but at last they discovered, that there was one place where a course of half bricks had been put in place of whole ones. The other building was so delicately adjusted, that the length of the sound waves reached the exact distance across the auditorium, and the slightest whisper could be heard all over the room, but that half brick met and broke the sound waves in the wrong place, making it impossible to clearly hear in certain parts of the church. That little defect made all the difference.

Beloved, some of you do not hear God's voice, because something is the matter. It does not take much to hinder you from hearing God's voice, a very little may block. You may be all right and measure up exactly except in one direction, but there is no communication with your Lord, because of that little thing. You perhaps would not think that it would make the difference. Something is the matter with your acoustic properties, find it to-day. How long is it since you heard God speak, and since God spoke to your heart? No wonder you have not had faith when it comes by hearing.

2. *Obedience.* The word in the original also means, to obey. If you hear with any other intent than that which obeys God, it is not the kind of hearing that brings faith. "Faith cometh by hearing," and by the kind of hearing, that obeys God. One of the most wonderful secrets that the Lord Jesus Christ ever revealed was the secret of how He learned all His spiritual teaching, as a man. As God He did not have to learn, but as a man, He learned even as we have, to learn it. The Lord Jesus Christ was always divine even while on earth, but when He became man, He did not take His divinity into account. It says, "but made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant . . . and humbled Himself," He emptied Himself. He was still God, but He did not take His Godhead into account. One day, they said, "How is it that this man knows all these things seeing that He never learned, never went to college, never went to the Pharisees' school nor sat at the feet of Gamaliel?" Jesus reveals to us the way He learned, and to some of us it may sound like every day teaching, but it is the pathway to spiritual mysteries, and to the revelation of God, where you can see Him face to face. It is this—"he that willeth to do His will,"—he that willeth to do, he that obeys, "shall know." The way He received as a man all spiritual light was by being willing to obey, and obeying every spark of light that came, and God poured in more light. We have in this text the same principle announced as applying to faith. Faith cometh by obedience. Walk in the light God gives even though it costs deeper sacrifices and separation. Failure in faith springs from not following more closely. True faith cometh no other way than that of obedience.

3. *The Power of the Word of God.* Faith cometh by hearing and hearing through the Word of God. Faith not simply gives the substance, but is the substance of whatever we believe for. But how? By hearing the Word. You hear the Word, and then God gives you faith through that Word. By the Word of God, the heaven and the earth were made. God said, "Let there be light and there was light." As creation came by the Word of God, so faith, that is, and possesses all God's Omnipotence—that has its source in God so faith, that gift, is created in you by the Word of God. This is the "how" of it.

Here was a world," and to this mountain faith says to God, "done; faith against you times seventy forgive you moving the mountain love is created and My word it shall be done means it shall be done—you have to you," this means ask what you thoroughly shall be done and it will way. "All possible to comes not from not mere in has its spring.

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Here was space without a world—God said, "Let there be a world," and there was a world. God tells your faith to say to this mountain, "Be thou removed," and it shall be done; faith says to the camellia tree, "be plucked up," and it is done; faith says to you, when your brother has sinned against you again and again, seven times, yea, even seven times seventy, and he comes again to you, faith says, "I forgive you and love you." This is as miraculous as removing the mountain, but faith enables you to say it, and the love is created in you. John 15:7 reads, "If ye abide in Me and My words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will and it shall be done unto you." The Greek word for "done" means "it shall become—shall be created." "If ye abide,"—you have this as the condition, "and My words abide in you," this must be fully so, or He will not work, "ye shall ask what ye will and it shall be done," because you are so thoroughly given up to Him. It is He in you asking. It shall be done, it shall become, or be created if necessary, and it will be created, if it can not be done in any other way. "All things are possible with God, and all things are possible to him that believeth," and the power to believe comes not from men, but has its source in God. Faith is not mere intellectual assent, nor founded upon reason,—it has its spring in God, is God inspired and God-imparted.

One day we were not saved, the next day we believed, and as soon as we believed we had. May God teach us, that not only in respect to initial salvation, but in respect to everything we need, and every time we take a spiritual step, God puts us in touch with creative power, not man's, but God's working through man. Kneel before Him, and listen as He speaks His Word of promise to your heart;—"Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the Word of God." No matter what your need may be, definitely believe His promise. He giveth and worketh the faith within you. "Trust also in Him and He shall bring it to pass."

TOPICS.

The Vilna province of Lithuania, where such bitter weather has been experienced, is probably the only part of the world in which geese are shod. This district is famous for geese which are driven on foot to distant markets. To prevent the birds getting footsore on the journey, they are made in the late autumn to practise the "goose-step" first in tar and then through fine sand. The geese are thus provided with perfectly fitting pairs of boots, in which they can comfortably perform the 200 mile march to the goose fair at Warsaw.

The Christian is like a little child walking between Christ and the world, one hand to hold by and one to help by.

The Christian population of Korea numbers 299,090 according to figures furnished by the Rev. Dr. George Heber Jones, a Methodist missionary of Chemulpo, Korea. Dr. Jones, who is now in America on furlough, thinks that in case of war between Russia and Japan both of the contending parties would respect the rights of Korean missionaries and the safety of the Christian Church. He says further (as reported by the *New York Tribune*): "Splendid men guard the interests of foreign nations in Korea. Horace N. Allen, the present United States Minister, first went to Korea twenty years ago as the founder of the Presbyterian Church Mission there. Hon. J. N. Jordan, C. M. G., the British Minister, is a Christian of the highest character and of wide experience in diplomatic affairs in the Far East. M. Hayashi, the Japanese Minister, has always been the friend and ally of his American and British colleagues where the interests of missions are concerned."

"Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts. And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."

Mr. Edison, the eminent American man of science, was once asked whether he ever expected, with all his inventiveness, to be able to invent an instrument to enable a man to see down into his neighbour's secret thoughts. And the answer of that most original man was to this effect: "Even if I could construct such a terrible instrument, God forbid that I should ever publish it to the world. 'For,' he said, 'did we all see down into the secret thoughts of one another about one another, human life would no longer be bearable on the earth. There would not be two friends left to trust one another, and to love one another, in the whole world. Family life itself would instantly fly into pieces. Human society, in all its combination, would at once become dissolved. For all men would flee to the rocks, and to the mountains, and would cry to them, 'Fall on us and hide us, and all our secret thoughts, from before the faces of all men.'

No, though our Almighty Maker, the Great Inventor, has not entrusted us with an instrument whereby so see down into our neighbour's secret thoughts about us, He has done far better than that. For he has committed to our keeping, and to our constant use, an infallible instrument for seeing down into our own secret thoughts about ourselves, and about our neighbour, and about everything else. And that secret window—to call it a window—is so wonderfully constructed, and is so filled in all its frames with such wonderful glass, that every pane of it is as dark as midnight to every eye but the Eye of the Great Inventor and our own eye. And thus it is that my God and Saviour and I myself are the sole spectators of all that goes on in my mind, and in my heart, and down among my secret thoughts. "O Lord, Thou hast searched me and known me. Thou knowest my down-sitting and mine uprising. Thou understandest my thoughts a far off."



There are two famous pictures of Martin Luther. In the one the young monk stands before a chained Bible, stooping, pale, thin, frightened. In the other he stands erect, serene, and joyous, with an enchained Bible in his hand. The first picture represents him when he believed that repentance meant penance; in the second he believes, with the consent of all within him, that repentance is a gracious change of mind. It was, he says, like the opening of the gate of paradise when he discovered that repentance is that movement of the soul by which a sinner returns to God. That word, rightly understood made Luther the greatest spiritual force of his age, and moved the world at the Reformation; and there resides in it, or rather in the reality it signifies, a power which may yet shake Romanism from its centre to its circumference.

An important discovery of molybdenum has been made about 50 miles north-west of the Pitt Lake, British Columbia. The mine is being worked by an American company, and as indicating the present demand for this metal it may be noted that an order has been received for 200 tons from London. Molybdenum is classed among the rarer metals, and received its name on account of its resemblance to lead, molybdenos being the Greek name for that metal. An ammonium compound of molybdenum is a familiar reagent in the laboratory, furnishing a delicate test for phosphoric acid. Other compounds of the metal are much used in toxicological chemistry. Alloyed with four or five per cent. of carbon a silver-white metal harder than topaz is formed. Molybdenum is also used in making steel.

AFTER THE VISION.

"I have seen the vision of Thee, O Christ :
Now what wilt thou have me do ?
For the hardest work in all the world
I offer Thee service true."
"Go back, my child, to thy little cares ;
Thou hast known them very long.
Bear for me yet a little while
Thy feeling of bitter wrong.
"Lord Christ, I am ready for martyrdom,
For banishment, death or pain. "
"Patiently thine heartache hide,
Sing at thy task again !"
"I am strong and eager and loving, Lord ;
I have courage rare to endure ! "
"Are thine ears averse to slander, child !
Is thine heart devout and pure !
"Glad art thou in thy neighbor's joy ?
Sufferest thou his need ?
Ah! Then I know that thou has seen
The vision of Me indeed."

THE NEW SENATE CHAPLAIN.

—With the new attention drawn to him by his appointment to be Chaplain of the United States Senate, stories of Dr. Everett Hale's past are in vogue. Here is one from the New York *Tribune*:

There is one tale touching upon his editorial career in which the irrepressible office boy figures. The doctor had occasion to send the boy on a errand to a firm which for the sake of convenience will be called Black, White & Co. The hour was late and on the way the boy tarried so long that when he finally arrived at the offices of Black, White & Co. he found, much to his dismay, the place closed up.

How to announce his failure to perform the errand as directed in a satisfactory manner was evidently the problem that confronted the boy and when he entered the doctor's office he had his lie prepared.

"The firm was out," said the boy as he laid the note he had failed to deliver on the desk.

"Very well," replied the doctor. "You may take it in the morning. You are excused for the day."

It would have sufficed the boy had he left the office at that point, but finding that his falsehood worked admirably and with a conscience working guiltily within him, he could not avoid saying:

"Neither Mr. Black nor Mr. White was in. Fact is, I went to both their places and was disappointed."

The doctor wheeled about in his chair.

"What is that you say?" he demanded.

"I went to both places and neither of the men was in."

Dr. Hale looked the youthful prevaricator over.

"Um-m-m," he mused. "So you went to both places, eh? Quite interesting, my boy; quite interesting. Mr. Black has been dead ten years and Mr. White eight years—er—by the way, which place did you go to first?"

I think that John Tauler was telling the truth when, seven hundred years ago, he wrote:—

"Every art or work, however unimportant it may seem, is a gift of God; and all these gifts are bestowed by the Holy Ghost for the profit and welfare of men. Let us begin with the lowest. One can spin, another can make shoes, and some have great aptness for all sorts of outward arts. These are all gifts proceeding from the Spirit of God. If I were not a priest, but were living as a layman, I should take it as a great favour that I knew how to make shoes, and should try to make them better than anyone else, and should gladly earn my bread by the labour of my hands. There is no work so small, no art so mean but it all comes from God and is a special gift of His. Thus let each do that which another cannot do so well, and for love, returning gift for gift."

It was the same perception of a Divine truth that led his friends to inscribe on the tombstone of David Golf in Scotland: "David Golf, Shoemaker by the Grace of God." Any worthy work in this world that God assigns to a man is work for that man to do, and if it be very humble and secular as men regard it, it is yet the most spiritual and Divine work that that man can take up if God gave it to him to do.

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